THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

"Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city."—MAT. x, 15.

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FIFTY-FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 285.]

SECOND DAY.

Monday, 2 p.m.

Choir sang,

Praise to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days.

Prayer by President Angus M. Cannon.

Choir sang,

The Lord my pasture shall prepare,
And feed me with a shepherd's care.

President George Q. Cannon then read the statistical reports of the various Stakes of Zion.

Apostle Erastus Snow said the Gospel as expounded by the Savior and his apostles was a perfect law of liberty. All the revelations that God ever gave to man in ancient or modern times tended to true freedom. Nothing connected with the Gospel of Christ has the tendency to restrain men of their liberty. These doctrines have attempted to draw a line between liberty and licentiousness, between liberty and oppression. Oppression and slavery are the result of sin, and violations of the principles of the everlasting Gospel, either by the ruled, by the rulers, or both and generally by both. True freedom of mind and body, and the enjoyment of human liberty, rest upon human integrity and virtue, and the observance of those principles of truth upon which all liberty is founded. There are some people who think they are always in bondage unless they are all the time trying to get into trouble; some seem never to be happy unless perfectly miserable. Oppression and slavery are in no way connected with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Nihilists of Russia, the Socialists of France, and the "Liberals" of Utah are panting for liberty," but to obtain their ends (which would certainly be anarchy and destruction) they would assassinate the representatives of government, kill the king, dethrone Jehovah. The same restless spirit that agitates such people has existed in former ages of the world, and their course is related in Bible history, and also their sad fate is made manifest by the displeasure of the Almighty against their rebellious course. "The powers that

be are ordained of God," and a monarchial, or republican, or other form of government, is far better than no government, or the rule of those who most clamor for freedom with their mouths, but are tyrants in their hearts, and are destroyers of good regulations and wholesome restraints. The oppression of a king is preferable to the oppression of a mob, where every man's will is his own law.

The speaker made a wise and discriminating contrast between the government of God and the condition of anarchy that is being aimed at by freedom-shouters in different nations of the earth. He then spoke of the power and efficacy of the priesthood in the settlement of difficulties by pacific measures, on the principle of amicable adjustment. There are no officials on the face of the earth who are so easily approached for the purpose of listening to and affording counsel and aid to those needing it, as the various authorities and officials in the Church and kingdom of God, and there are no people who understand liberty better than the Latter-day Saints, for they have learned it in the Gospel. He could bear testimony to the fact that there are no better social and family regulations anywhere, nor any more true liberty, than can be found in many of our polygamous households, and that they were far superior to those that existed in many places in so-called Christendom. In a political sense we are complained of because we will vote for our friends, and give our sanction to those whom we know will make a wise and proper use of the power and means placed in their hands, and will not vote for our enemies who seek place and power for their own aggrandisement and personal ends. Some people's ideas of liberty seem to be independence of law — hostility to union, order and peace. Our regenerators would make it appear that unless we go to the polls and vote their ticket, we are oppressed and priest-ridden. Yes, we do vote with the priesthood; we would indeed be foolish to vote for our enemies; then let us vote for our friends. Everybody acquainted with the Territory knows that the municipal, county and territorial offices of Utah are more justly and equitably managed, the taxes are less, and the wants of the people are more judiciously cared for than in any other State or Territory in the United States. We have not one defaulter in office here for ten in any other State. There are some who have heard so much of this twaddle about being priest-ridden, that they think unless they vote with their enemies they will be put down as "Mormon" slaves; but reflecting men see through these things. There are people who, instead of beginning to better the world by purifying their own hearts and homes, try to serve God like the devil, by turning their attention abroad, and thus create anarchy. It is like the idiot who, because he is himself houseless, and is compelled to sleep on the steps of the nabob, will put the torch to the nabob's palace and destroy it. Fools can destroy, but it takes wise men to build up. When the time comes that the extremists of the land sweep through the country with the violence of a tornado, God will interpose his arm, and the Saints of God will rally around the Constitution, and form a nucleus around which men and women of virtue, intelligence and love of order will gather and carry out the purposes of God in promoting peace and true liberty. He directed some plain and pointed remarks against those who are opposed to order and good government, and showed that all law, human and divine, should tend to the maintenance of human rights and the welfare of all mankind.

Elder John Nicholson said he considered it the greatest privilege that could be enjoyed to be identified with the great work of the Lord established in our day, by revelation from heaven. The divine character of the work had been manifested to him personally, by the Spirit of God, so that he was enabled to bear witness to its divine authenticity. The promise made in connection with the preaching of this Gospel of the kingdom, that each obedient believer should receive an unerring individual witness of its truthfulness, was one of the characteristic features that strongly distinguished it from all other systems

claiming to be religious and saving. The speaker said that since he last had the pleasure of attending a General Conference of the Church, he had spent over two years on a mission to Great Britain, where he had rejoiced in proclaiming the Gospel among the people of the world. While engaged in that labor, he had taken pleasure in observing the evidences of the development of the work of God in the progress of the exponents of its principles. He had labored in the ministry previous to coming to the gathering place, and was then, nearly twenty years ago, acquainted with the condition of the elders. Comparison was largely in favor, as a whole, of those now sent out. The young men, born and reared in the Church, were, as a rule, manifesting much devotion, and fearlessly proclaimed the Gospel among the people. The speaker bore testimony to the divine character of the mission of Joseph Smith, regarding whose claims to being a prophet there was more abundant and striking evidence than in the case of any other man laying claim to prophetic inspiration that he knew anything about.

President Geo. Q. Cannon then read the financial reports of the Logan and Manti Temples.

President Jos. F. Smith gave out notices that the elders called on a mission to Europe, who were expected to leave on the 12th of April, will not now leave until the 19th. Also that a meeting of the Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations would be held in the Assembly Hall in the evening at 7 o'clock.

The choir and congregation sang,

Guide us, O thou Great Jehovah,
Saints unto the promised land.

Conference was adjourned until 10 o'clock on Tuesday morning.

Benediction by Counselor D. H. Wells.

THIRD DAY.

Tuesday, 10 o'clock a.m.

The choir sang,

The great and glorious Gospel light
Has ushered forth unto my sight.

Prayer by Elder John H. Smith.

The choir sang,

Come listen to a Prophet's voice,
And hear the word of God.

Apostle F. M. Lyman heartily endorsed the sentiments advanced by previous speakers during this conference. We have a message of life and salvation to preach to the children of men, and God requires this service at our hands. We must, as a people, practice as well as believe what God has revealed for our salvation; we will be responsible to God for a faithful performance of all the duties required at our hands. God has inspired his servants to go abroad and preach the Gospel which we have received, and thousands have been gathered from the nations of the earth. In leaving our homes we have necessarily to make what appeared to be many sacrifices, but in reality we have made an excellent exchange, for our apparent loss has proved to us a great gain. We have gained power to obtain blessings connected with the Gospel which we never could have enjoyed had we remained where the Gospel first found us. God has taught us how to get free for our former sins, how to receive forgiveness therefor, how to escape condemnation, how to escape eternal woe, how to obtain wives and children and associations that will endure forever, with eternal lives, eternal riches and glory and exaltation in the presence of God. But in order to secure these great and inestimable blessings, we must live for them, and regulate our lives according to the laws which God has given us, or we shall not attain to these glorious blessings. The speaker then dwelt on the conditions that are necessary to obtain the exaltation we are seeking—namely, by complying with the ordinances of the Gospel, faith in God, purity of motive, and honesty of heart being essential requisites to obtain the forgiveness of sins and the reception of the Holy Ghost. And after persons are initiated as members of the Church, in order to receive and enjoy the favor and blessings of God, they must continue to observe every requirement of the Gospel. Let us be sure we take every step aright, and take no step that is wrong. Let us press forward with

energy and zeal to do the will of God, and understand that every commandment is essential; that honesty, temperance, virtue, truth, purity and integrity are as essential as faith, or baptism, or paying tithes, or any other rule or requirement. There is no real pleasure in doing wrong, but there is a blight that comes upon the soul from committing sin. Our religion forbids us from breaking either the laws of God or of man. We ought to be the most law-abiding people on the face of the earth. We have every liberty in the Gospel to do all the good we can while we are in the world, but we have not the liberty to do wrong, either to ourselves, our families or our neighbors. True we have our agency, and can act as we choose, but the law of God does not give us the right to do wrong. We are a Christian community; we believe in God and in Jesus Christ, and they have a perfect right to give us laws and to lay down certain rules and duties that must be observed by us in order to secure the blessings that are promised. God has told us that this work will endure forever, and our bodies and spirits will endure throughout eternity. It is necessary to cultivate all the powers of our being. The spiritual and moral and intellectual powers and faculties should be developed and cultured side by side with our physical faculties. Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and the Lord tutored and instructed him for years before he entrusted him with the priesthood, and the work that God required him to do; and the Lord is giving us his word as fast as we are able to receive it. We should be apt scholars, and learn to live by every word that proceeds from Him. After an earnest appeal to all present to live faithful to the truth, in order to secure the blessings of the Gospel, he prayed that God would continue to inspire his servants during the remainder of the conference.

Apostle Brigham Young felt pleased with the Spirit that has animated this Conference, and if the Latter-day Saints would strictly observe and carry out the counsels that are given them, there would be less need for so much preaching by the Elders. We as a people know that God led us to these mountains. We know that he raised up the prophet Joseph Smith. In preaching to those who assemble at these conferences the elders know they are addressing those who understand what God requires. They are not an ignorant people, but knowing the law of God is one thing, and the doing of it is another. The fact is we do not live strictly according to the light that we have recieved. He desired himself eternal life in the presence of God, and if he failed to obtain it, it would be his own fault, in not strictly observing the laws of God, and so with his brethren and sisters. He had recently visited the settlements south, and he was delighted to notice their growth, for they were fast filling up in numbers, and he verily believed they were also growing in faith. He was satisfied that sooner or later we as a people must observe some of the statutes of the Lord that now lie as a dead letter in our books, for God has decreed that His people must be united. What course the Lord will adopt to make us one he did not know, whether by letting loose upon us our enemies or some other way, it did not matter, for he felt confident that the time would come when we would either, become united together by common consent, or be scourged until we obeyed the revelations that had been given. God has permitted us to go hither or thither, to go to the mines, to engage in railroads and other enterprises, in our own way, irrespective of each other. But there is no safety for us except in being united. The centre Stake in Jackson County will never be built up until we become one. The redemption of Zion which has to be accomplished, and the city of the New Jerusalem that has to be built, will have to be done quickly if accomplished within the limit of time prophesied by the prophet Joseph, and if we did not make more progress the work might devolve upon the Lamanites. He also spoke of the condition of many of the co-operative institutions which he had observed during his visit through the settlements. He spoke on the principle of consecration, and urged the adoption of correct

habits of life to secure the blessing and protection of our heavenly Father.

President George Q. Cannon said many topics had been touched upon during this conference, and he hoped the brethren would remember them and carry them out when they reached their various fields of labor. The subject of education was one he felt deeply interested in, for no people on the earth should be stronger supporters of true education than the Latter-day Saints. The sending of elders abroad, to combat error, the laying out of colonies and many other important positions that the elders of this Church have to occupy, demand the most thorough and elevated education to fit and qualify them for these duties. He felt delighted to notice a growing taste and increasing desire to improve, as was noticeable among other things in the large audiences that attended the two previous evening meetings, one in connection with Sunday Schools, the other in connection with the Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations, also in the demand for libraries and works of instruction throughout the settlements. It is necessary that we make good selections of books, and teach our children that they must not take for granted that everything they read in books is necessarily true and correct. They should be taught to weigh for themselves the principles they read, and as a guard to throw around them, let them be instructed in the great cardinal truths of the Gospel and he had no fears for the result. For our children naturally are as well developed and capable of refined culture as any children on the face of the earth. He also urged upon parents to fit and qualify their children to fill honorable positions of life by giving them an education, instead of hoarding up means to leave behind them to be squandered and quarreled about. Young men should not give way to timidity and fear because of their early education having been neglected. They should set about with a determination to improve, for no one was too old to learn, and no one is justified in settling down under the impression that he cannot acquire a knowledge of anything, or acquire any branch of education that would prove a benefit and blessing to him. He related a little of the history of an able member of Congress now about forty years of age who when twenty-nine years old could not read, but had since acquired a good education and served his people several years in the State Legislature.

There are many bright intellects now to be found in very obscure families in this Territory, and they will, by and by, display talent that will astound their parents. Therefore I say to parents give the boys and girls every facility for acquiring an education, not confining them to books, but teach them how to labor and earn a living, not to have their minds so filled with book learning as to feel ashamed to take hold of a plow or to do any other kind of manual labor. He thanked God that intelligence was diffused like the free air, not confined to any family or line; that God was establishing no dynasty, no special family arrangement, but his gifts were free to all and were diffused among the people. He called on the brethren to train up their boys to usefulness as well as intellectual acquirements, and on the sisters to have their daughters not only well instructed in the ordinary routine of school education, but in habits of industry and honorable labor. Let our children be taught to depend upon their own exertions for the attainment of a livelihood, and not to expect others to provide it for them. He deplored the disposition in this country to depend on the State for an education and then for a living, and would have all educated and sustained in honorable independence.

The choir sang the anthem

"Come, let us go up to the Mountain of Lord."

Benediction by Elder F. D. Richards.

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2. p. m.

The choir sang,

Come, dearest Lord, descend and dwell,
By faith and love, in every breast.

Prayer by Apostle Lorenzo Snow.

The choir sang,

How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word.

Apostle John H. Smith said he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, because he knew it to be the power of God unto salvation. He felt truly thankful for the pleasure of being here at this conference, to listen to such words as were calculated to build us up in our most holy faith. The present surrounding circumstances of the Saints remind us of the great contrast with their condition nearly fifty years ago, when persecutions were so severe. The early experience of the Saints was of the most trying character. We are now permitted to worship and dwell in peace. Our opportunities for education in the past were of a very limited character. It was so with him personally. He never had the advantages in his early life that are surrounding our youth at the present time. He believed that God our heavenly Father intended to make his people the best educated of any of his creatures. It was necessary that we improve and advance step by step in human progress, that we may be better prepared to carry on the great work of God that he laid upon our shoulders. The door for our advancement in letters is now open, and there is no excuse for anyone to grow up in ignorance. Very much of course depends upon the mother's influence, for when a mother is determined to have her sons and daughters grow up in the knowledge of letters, and a knowledge of the truth, they will certainly do so, and grow up to be honored among mankind. He never heard an elder in this Church advocate any principle of wrong doing, but from his youth up he had listened to their teachings, and knew that all their counsels and instructions were of a character that would elevate and ennoble and advance mankind in the scale of being. God has designed that his people should be among the best and noblest of his creatures. Let us therefore be zealous in self-culture and good works, and establish for ourselves a reputation that will enable us to stand erect, before our fellows, without fear. It is our mission to publish the Gospel from land to land and also to be useful at home, for we are called to be saviors of men, and use an influence that will lead the youth away from sin and evil, and elevate them to be fit companions for the highest intelligences. He strongly recommended parents to inspire their children with love and confidence, so that in all their sayings and doings there is no one to whom they can appeal so quickly and safely for council, and to whom they can confide their secret desires and thoughts, and confess their follies and sins, than their own parents. He concluded by praying that God may guide us into the truth, and make us what he designs us to be as his sons and daughters, and the saviors of our race.

President Geo. Q. Cannon then read an epitome of receipts and disbursements of tithing for the year 1880. On motion, the report was referred to the auditing committee. He also read an account of receipts and disbursements of the Perpetual Emigrating Fund. This report having been audited by a committee appointed for that purpose, it was formally accepted by the Conference.

The Relief Society report was then read and was also accepted as follows:

Officers of the Relief Societies — Eliza R. Snow Smith, President; Zina D. Young and Elizabeth A. Whitney, Counselors; Sarah M. Kimball, Secretary; M. I. Horne, Treasurer.

Stake superintendents who have sent in their reports: Bear Lake, Julia P. Linsey; Davis, Sarah Holmes; Juab, Amelia Goldsbrough; Kanab, Elizabeth Nuttall; Willard, B. M. Pratt; Morgan, Lydia Riche; Parowan, Ellen W. Lunt; Salt Lake, M. I. Horne; St. George, Minerva W. Snow; Summit, Sarah S. Richards; Tooele, Mary Ann Hunter; Utah, Margeret T. Smoot; Weber, Jane S. Richards; Sevier, Elizabeth Bean.

Box Elder reported, but the name of the superintendent does not appear.

The following Stakes not reported: Beaver, Cache, Wasatch, Arizona, Little Colorado and Eastern Arizona.

Total of teachers, 1,530; members, 9,650; officers and members, 12,288; meetings held, 1,532; average attendance, 3,834.

Woman's Exponent taken, 960.

On hand at date of last report,

Cash, $3,352.21; property, $24,099.23; wheat, 9,859 bushels.

RECEIPTS—In cash, $3,279.28; in property, $3,513.20; in wheat 670 bushels.

DISBURSEMENTS—To the poor, $3,468.31; emigration, $310.43; temples, $1,214.11; home industries, $689.97; books, $143.13; missionary, $98.70; buildings, $1,617.47; Indians, $66.45.

Totals on hand in cash, property and wheat, $36,822.24.

President Cannon passed a high encomium on the neat and comprehensive report the ladies had presented, and also on the labors that the sisters have so zealously performed, and considered there can be no one at all acquainted with the good being accomplished by them but must highly appreciate them.

The Sunday School Union annual report was then read and accepted as follows:

Sunday School Statistical Report:

No. of schools reported, 274; No of schools not reported, 10; No. of male officers and teachers, 3,220; No. of female officers and teachers, 2,101; total number of officers and teachers, 5,321; average attendance of officers and teachers, 3,722; No. of male pupils, 15,921; No. of female pupils, 16,565; total number of pupils, 32,486; average attendance of pupils, 22,778; total number of officers, teachers and pupils, 37,807; No. of theological classes, 171; No. of Bible and Testament classes, 985; No. of Book of Mormon classes, 373; No. of Doctrine and Covenant classes, 182; No. of *Juvenile Instructor* classes, 181; No. of Catechism classes, 156; No. of miscellaneous classes, 1,397; total number of classes, 3,445; No. of books in library, 20,580; amount of funds on hand at end of last year, $1,170.87; amount of funds collected, $6,670.69; amount of funds disbursed, $6,287.07; amounts of funds in treasury, $1,484.66.

Officers of the Deseret Sunday School Union: George Q. Cannon, General Superintendent; George Goddard, 1st Assistant; Levi W. Richards, Secretary; George Reynolds, Treasurer.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A GATHERING SONG FOR THE SAINTS.

TUNE.—"In the Cross."

In the land of Zion fair,
Ephraim's chosen valley,
Saints of God, your home is there,
To Zion you must rally!
CHORUS—Soon we'll cross, soon we'll cross,
O'er the mighty waters;
And we'll live in righteousness,—
Fair Zion's sons and daughters!

Let us true and faithful be
'Midst all our distresses,
Soon we shall deliv'rance see.
God his people blesses!
Chorus—Soon we'll cross, etc.

Father, hear thy children cry;—
How we long to gather,
For thy chosen vales we sigh,
Help us, Oh our Father!
Chorus—Soon we'll cross, etc.

We have waited long for thee
And thy word rely on,
From this land O help us flee
To thy chosen Zion!
Chorus—Soon we'll cross, etc.

All our cov'nants we will keep,
And from sin we'll sever;
Father, see thy people weep,
While we praise thee ever!
Chorus—Soon we'll cross, etc.

All thy ways with joy we seek,
Ever to thee clinging;
Hear us now, the poor and weak,
Praises to thee singing!
Chorus—Soon we'll cross, etc.

From thy law we will not swerve!
Bless our firm endeavor!
None but thee will Zion serve,
In righteous works forever!
Chorus—Soon we'll cross, etc.

God doth hear his faithful Saints,
As they raise their voices,
He will answer their complaints
Till ev'ry heart rejoices!
Chorus—Soon we'll cross, etc.

C. W. S.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

MONDAY, MAY 9, 1881.

CAUSES OF APOSTASY.

Since the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in our day, as well as during its existence in ancient days, many of its members have lost their "first love" for the Gospel, and in time seceded from its principles. Varied and numerous have been the causes for this apostasy. We do not purpose entering now into all of the reasons for the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, as many of them are well known. It is pretty generally understood in the Church, even among the youngest members, that all classes of immorality and dishonesty will, unless speedily repented of, lead to darkness of the mind and consequent denial of the faith. But there are other causes which, although not so marked in their immediate effects, will in time, if permitted to operate, result in the final overthrow of our faith in God's Work.

One of these is pride, which in different persons assumes different forms, according to the circumstances and general disposition of the individual. It is found among the poor as well as the rich, and is manifested in false notions of various kinds, in outward show, and in pretended antecedents of supposed renown or position, while perhaps the gratification of this class of pride is sapping the very foundation of candor and honesty which in themselves are far greater treasures than even a good name, and with which outward appearances should never be compared for a moment. Others again are egotistical. Possessed of intelligence which should lead to better things, and develop virtues of real merit, they suffer themselves to entertain a pride of personal appearance, or of supposed mental superiority; while some encourage a feeling of self-righteousness. These are dangerous symptoms of a growing apostasy. We find such people inclined to criticise severely, and in some cases unmercifully, nearly every act and saying of their brethren, putting the very worst construction upon the weaknesses exhibited by others. Not only does this spirit lead them to disdain their associates, and perhaps their inferiors in the mental scale, but it urges at last to general fault-finding, to attacking the motives and objects of those whom God has placed to lead, to preside or to counsel in His kingdom; and thus in time they lose faith in the inspired utterances of the servants of God, because of weaknesses to which all who are human may be subject, or even of supposed evil motives, which it is most uncharitable, to say the least, to imagine or surmise. People who are proud manifest a "hollowness" in all they say and do which they vainly attempt to conceal, but which is glaringly perceptible to observers

and men of experience in the Church. Even their expressions designed to show or indicate humility carry with them the conviction of pride. Like Uriah Heep, they pride themselves in being "so umble," that they disgust where they aim to fascinate. Real humility is a great principle of the Gospel, but any imitation of this gem of virtues is a worthless bauble, no matter how brightly it may be polished or how elegantly it may be set. One of the most effectual means of acquiring real humility is to catechise ourselves, to criticise our own actions,—our own course. St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. 2, verses 21—23, gives a beautiful and telling lesson in the following language: "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God?" And then again in verses 28 and 29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." In fact, let the Spirit of the Lord search our own inward parts, and cleanse us every whit, and we feel bold to say that during the process of cleansing, we shall all be humble; for we shall be too much absorbed in our own follies, imperfections, traditions and sins of omission and commission,—too much occupied with the "beams" in our own eyes to trouble much about the "motes" in the eyes of our brethren.

Another fruitful cause of apostasy is the non-compliance with the law of tithing, to which we have made reference from time to time in our editorial pages. No member of the Church can reasonably expect to prosper spiritually, who wilfully month after month neglects his tithing. And there is no better indication of the enjoyment of God's Holy Spirit than the prompt and punctual payment of our tithing. *None* are too poor to pay one-tenth of what they earn, for we have the direct promise of the Almighty in the book of Malachi, that He will "pour out blessings on those who pay their tithes and offerings, *till they have not room to contain them.*" And why should the poor, of whom the Church in these lands is so largely composed, deem themselves unworthy of the blessings which flow both spiritually and temporally to all who obey this gracious law? Those who slight this requirement are not justified before God or his servants, and we call on them to repent and "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," that "all other things may be added," and that they may rejoice in the blessings of the Spirit of peace which rest upon the faithful and obedient. Particularly should leading men in the branches set a worthy example in this regard, that new life may be infused into the members, and thus all grow together in faith and good works.

Let the evils above mentioned be at once corrected, and as quickly as others are shown labor to eradicate them, for by so doing, at least some of the causes of apostasy will be removed from our hearts and lives, and we shall stand firmer in the truth, and be less likely to waver in the midst of trial, and be better able to resist temptation when "doubts and fears" take hold upon the mind.

ARRIVED.—At 4.15 a.m., on Saturday last, Elders A. N. Macfarlane, Rodney Hillam and Benjamin R. Rich, missionaries from Utah, arrived in Liverpool by the S.S. *Abyssinia*, of the Guion Line. Also on Wednesday last, by the S. S. *Atlas* from Boston, Elder William Butler, Missionary to Europe. The brethren were all in good health and spirits.

CORRESPONDENCE.

INTERESTING LETTER FROM MANCHESTER CONFERENCE.

Tyldesley, May 3, 1881.

President Albert Carrington.

Dear Brother,—A few lines from me, at this time, may not be uninteresting to the readers of the STAR.

I came into this conference in the first part of November last; I have labored from that time until the present, with all the energy that my Father in heaven has given me, for the salvation of souls and the building up of the kingdom of God, and I am happy to say, not without success. The Lord has blessed the labors of myself and my brethren in this district.

The Pendlebury branch is large and prosperous. We are baptizing and adding to our numbers almost every week. This branch numbers 73 souls, and still the work of the Lord is onward. I am very sorry to say that brother James Berry, the late president of this branch, has passed behind the vail; he was a father to his people and faithful until death.

Our beloved president, Thomas X. Smith, and myself hired the Temperance Hall at Tyldesley for three months, and we are getting up a lively interest in this place. I was invited to take tea with a friend by the name of Roberts, who does not belong to this Church, and the family came together to see me. I faithfully laid down to them the principles of the Gospel, which they believed. I called on them the next day, and found them rejoicing in the Lord. They brought to me an infant in arms, with a crippled arm and hand, whom the doctor told them could not be cured. I took the child's arm in my hands, and blessed it in the name of the Lord. Two weeks from that time I came back to Tyldesley, and called to see the same family, and the child could move its fingers and use its arm. Two weeks before this, the hand and arm were nothing but skin and bone, but now they are fully developed.

I have baptized a very promising young man of this family, with a prospect of all the family joining at an early day. At the same time I baptized two from Pendlebury. So you see that the work of the Lord is onward. We have a large field of labor before us, and I think much good will be done here before long. My health has much improved. I know the blessing of the Lord will attend the labors of his faithful elders, if they will live so that they can be in continual possession of the Holy Ghost.

May the choicest of Heaven's blessings rest upon you and the brethren in the Office, is the prayer of

Your brother in the Gospel,

ISAAC DUFFIN.

A laugh raised at the expense of a well-meaning person is highly injudicious, and in many cases rarely forgotten. The ridiculing of another person's words and ideas is a most uncharitable and hurtful practice, for, when long forgotten by the speaker, his remarks rankle in the mind of the victim.

The best gifts—those that we should covet above all others did we comprehend their value—are not those which may or may not chance to come to us, but those which must inevitably follow us when we are good and true, faithful and wise. The worst calamities are not those which may come upon us unawares, but those which follow from conscious wrong-doing.

MINUTES OF THE LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE,

HELD IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, GREAT GEORGE STREET, SUNDAY, MAY 1, 1881.

Present from Utah—Apostle Albert Carrington, President of the European Mission; Elders C. W. Stayner, L. R. Martineau and C. B. Felt, from the Liverpool Office; Jno. Donaldson, president of, and R. F. Goold, Wm. R. Jones, Wm. Probert, jun., and David Cook, traveling elders in the Liverpool Conference, and Thos. X. Smith, President of the Manchester Conference.

10.30 a.m.

Singing. Prayer by Elder Goold. Singing.

Sacrament was administered by Elders Goold and Anderson.

Pres. Donaldson made some preliminary remarks, introducing the business of the conference, and called upon the traveling elders to report their respective districts.

Elder Goold reported the Liverpool and Runcorn district. The Saints were feeling well and striving to do right. Although prospects were unpromising for some time, Elders Jones and Vickers, followed by himself, had been blessed in introducing the Gospel where there were no Saints. In the town of Warrington, friends had been raised up for them, who not only gave them a "cup of cold water," but opened their houses for meetings, resulting in the recent additions to the Church of several new members.

Elder Probert reported a lively feeling in his—the Wigan district. Since the meetings held at Skelmersdale, considerable inquiry had sprung up, and he, with brother Jones, had been able to hold many conversations with strangers upon the principles of the Gospel, and had dispelled much prejudice.

Elder Cook took pleasure in stating that a spirit of unity prevails among the Saints in the Darwen district. Many tracts had been distributed, and it was intended to soon commence holding open-air meetings.

Pres. Donaldson then submitted the reports of the conference, and presented the general authorities of the Church, of the Mission, and of the conference, who were unanimously sustained by the uplifted hand. He then gave some advice to the Saints, and preached a brief but interesting discourse upon the first principles of the Gospel; quoted the words of our Lord to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" also other passages of Scripture showing the necessity and mode of baptism. Closed by bearing a powerful testimony to the divinity of the principles revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and taught by the Latter-day Saints.

Singing. Benediction by Elder C. B. Felt.

2.30 p.m.

Singing. Prayer by Elder W. R. Jones. Singing.

Elder Scott Anderson addressed the congregation. Previous to joining this Church, he felt sure that the Lord had a plan of salvation for the inhabitants of the earth. He listened to the elders preaching the Gospel, compared what he heard with the Scriptures, carefully weighed the arguments and principles advanced, and became convinced that the true plan of salvation was possessed and proclaimed by the Latter-day Saints. Referred to the statement made by the Protestants, that for 800 years the people were "steeped in the most abominable idolatry." Is not this a proof that the Gospel was not among them—that it was taken from the earth? Did Martin Luther, or the other Reformers, restore it? True, they reformed many of the evils then existing, but they did not claim to have received a call from Heaven; yet we read that the Gospel was to be restored by "an Angel flying through the midst of Heaven." Who, then, gave the ministers of to-day the authority which they assume? "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." If they had not re-

ceived it from the angel spoken of in Revelations, then they did not possess it. He bore a strong testimony that the Church of Christ is on the earth to-day, and that the Gospel was true as preached by the Latter-day Saints.

Elder Martineau bore testimony to the truth of the words spoken by brother Anderson. The God we worship is a God of order, yet the world to-day is simply a religious chaos. Where there is no order, God is not manifested. We believe that our Savior meant what he said, and that his apostles spoke plain truths. As we heard this morning from brother Donaldson, God is unchangeable. We read in the Scriptures that the Lord set in his Church "some apostles, and some prophets," etc., and as the world to-day claim that the canon of Scripture is full, that the Lord no longer reveals his will unto man, if there is nothing in the Scriptures doing away with these things, they are, by their own arguments, still necessary, and should be in existence in the Church. For man to do the will of God he must know it. He could not be a consistent worshiper in ignorance and blindness, consequently must have revelation.

Elder Stayner desired not only the attention, but also the prayers of every honest heart present, that he might be able to speak under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. We do not want to make converts who will merely confess Christ with their lips, but those who will also practice his teachings in their lives, and become imbued with his Spirit, which he promised would be poured out upon those who obeyed the Gospel in sincerity. We find ourselves in the same position as the Saints of other ages—attacked and maligned, and all manner of evil spoken of us. Such was the case even with our Lord and Savior. One of the charges brought against us is, that we substitute Joseph Smith for Jesus Christ. As well might ancient Israel be accused of disbelieving in God, because Moses was their prophet and leader; or we might as reasonably say the ancient people discarded the Deity, because the prophet Elijah ministered unto them, and gave them His word. It is because we believe in the Savior that we accept his servants sent to warn the people of the coming of the Messiah, and to organize his Church upon the foundation of apostles and prophets. Another charge is that we substitute the Book of Mormon for the Bible. This also is untrue! What is the Bible? Records which were kept by inspired men who lived on the Eastern Hemisphere at various periods of the world's history. These records were finally collated by a council for the purpose, bound together and given to the world as the Bible. These records contain only the history of God's dealings with the people in the eastern part of the world. What is the Book of Mormon? It is a record of the people upon the American Continent—the Western Hemisphere—teaching the same Gospel as contained in the Bible, and which was written by inspired men whose ancestors went from Jerusalem 600 years before Christ, and translated in this generation from the ancient plates into the English language, by the power of God. He then gave an interesting account of the colonization of America, and showed that the Book of Mormon plainly revealed the origin of the American Indians,—a question which had perplexed the world for centuries. Where was the inconsistency in believing this? There was greater inconsistency in thinking that while Christ had died for all the world, he had only revealed the Gospel to one-half of it. He also touched on other principles, and bore testimony to the condition of the Saints in Zion, and showed how false rumors were originated against them, and their effects among the people.

Singing. Benediction by Elder Probert.

6.30 p. m.

Singing. Prayer by Elder Schofield. Singing.

President Smith exhorted the Saints to keep the Covenants which they had made, saying, if we do we shall have the Spirit to guide us into all truth. Jesus, 40 days after his resurrection, left his disciples, promising to send them the Holy Ghost—the Comforter,

which he did upon the day of Pentecost, when the first Gospel sermon after the ascension of our Lord was preached. Showed that that same sermon was applicable in this day. Quoted largely from the Bible, containing the first principles of the Gospel. Appealed to all present to read the Scriptures, "for these are they which testify of me."

Apostle Carrington spoke concerning the Lord's great latter-day work, men's agency, the gathering, the comprehensiveness of the great plan of salvation, and the blessings enjoyed by those who observe its principles.

Singing. Benediction by President Donaldson.

The attendance throughout the day was moderately good, and the Saints left feeling they had enjoyed a rich treat.

C. B. FELT, Clerk.

THE LAST OF THE THREE WITNESSES.

When the Book of Mormon was translated by the gift and power of God, the divine promise was made to Joseph Smith the Prophet that three witnesses should be permitted to see the plates and receive a manifestation from God concerning the record, that they might be able to bear testimony concerning this work to all nations. This promise was fulfilled, and Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris were the persons chosen to receive that revelation. Their testimony, as published to the world and translated into different languages, is as follows:

"Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen."

OLIVER COWDERY.
DAVID WHITMER.
MARTIN HARRIS.

In the history of Joseph Smith an account of the circumstances and manner of this manifestation is given, and this has been corroborated many times by each of the witnesses, to the effect that in answer to their prayers, an angel of God appeared before them and turned over the plates leaf by leaf, so that they saw the hieroglyphics there inscribed, and the voice of God spoke to them from the heavens, bearing testimony that the record was correctly translated. At first they received no answer to their prayers, and Martin Harris withdrew himself from the circle; on his departure, the manifestation was received by Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery and David

Whitmer. The Prophet then went to where Martin Harris was praying alone, and joined with him in supplication to God, and the vision was repeated, to Martin Harris's perfect satisfaction and great joy.

These three persons, after some years' membership in the Church, were severally excommunicated for disaffection or transgression. Their disconnection with the Church has been cited as evidence against the Book of Mormon. To us it is very strong proof in its favor. If there had been any collusion between Joseph Smith and them, he would not have dared to withdraw fellowship from them, for fear of exposure. And after they were cut off from the Church, their testimony concerning the Book of Mormon and this divine manifestation to them remained the same. It never wavered, never changed. Among friends or among foes, they maintained their integrity so far as this was concerned, and nothing could induce them to retract a syllable.

Oliver Cowdery returned repentant to the fold, again lifted up his voice in defence of the truth, and died still testifying to the divinity of the Book of Mormon and the witness he had received. At this time the Church was in the midst of difficulties, having been driven from civilization and not having yet established itself in the midst of the mountains. Martin Harris re-joined the Church, and came to Utah, where, before his decease, he also lifted up his voice in many places, clinging to his original testimony. David Whitmer is still living, and so far as we can learn has never faltered nor been shaken in his attestations of the same facts. He is not connected with the Church, does not endorse the doctrine of plurality of wives, nor some other principles introduced by the Prophet Joseph, under divine commands, but has repeatedly testified to the angelic vision as at first, up to a very recent date.

A copy of the Richmond *Conservator*, of March 25, has been handed to us by Brother Samuel Russell; who is acquainted with David Whitmer and with the persons whose names are given below. It contains a statement by the last of the three witnesses which will be interesting to our readers, and we reproduce it with the exception of some paragraphs not directly bearing on the subject of the the manifestation, and which contain remarks that we have not the space now to discuss. Following is the "notice:"

Unto all Nations, Kindred, Tongues and People, unto whom these presents shall come:

It having been represented by one John Murphy, of Polo, Caldwell County, Missouri that I, in a conversation with him last summer, denied my testimony as one of the three witnesses of the "Book of Mormon."

To the end, therefore, that he may understand me now, if he did not then; and that the world may know the truth, I wish now, standing as it were, in the very sunset of life, and in the fear of God, once for all to make this public statement:

That I have never at any time denied that testimony or any part thereof, which has so long since been published with that Book, as one of the three witnesses. Those who know me best will know that I have always adhered to that testimony. And that no man may be misled or doubt my present views in regard to the same, I do again affirm the truth of all my statements as then made and published.

"He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear;" it was no delusion; what is written is written, and he that readeth let him understand.

* * * *

"And if any man doubt, should he not carefully and honestly read and understand the same before presuming to sit in judgment and condemning the light, which shineth in darkness, and showeth the way of eternal life as pointed out by the unerring hand of God."

In the Spirit of Christ, who hath said: "Follow thou me, for I am the life, the light and the way," I submit this statement to the world, God in whom I trust being my judge as to the sincerity of my motives and the faith and hope that is in me of eternal life.

My sincere desire is that the world

may be benefited by this plain and simple statement of the truth.

And all the honor to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which is our God. Amen!

DAVID WHITMER, SR.

Richmond, Mo., March 19, 1881.

We, the undersigned citizens of Richmond, Ray County, Mo., where David Whitmer, Sr., has resided since the year A. D. 1838, certify that we have been long and intimately acquainted with him and know him to be a man of highest integrity, and of undoubted truth and veracity.

Given at Richmond, Mo., this March 20, A. D. 1881.

A. W. Doniphan.
Geo. W. Dunn, Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit.
T. D. Woodson, President of Ray Co. Savings Bank.
J. T. Child, editor of *Conservator*.
H. C. Garner, Cashier of Ray Co. Savings Bank.
W. A. Holman, County Treasurer.
J. S. Hughes, Banker, Richmond.
D. P. Whitmer, Attorney-at-law.
Jas. W. Black, Attorney-at-law.
L. C. Cantwell, Postmaster, Richmond.
Geo. I. Wasson, Mayor.
James A. Davis, County Collector.
C. J. Hughes, Probate Judge and Presiding Justice of Ray County Court.
Geo. W. Trigg, County Clerk.
W. W. Mosby, M. D.
Thos. McGinnis, ex-Sheriff, Ray County.
J. P. Quesenberry, Merchant.
W. R. Holman, Furniture Merchant.
Lewis Slaughter, Recorder of Deeds.
Geo. W. Buchanan, M. D.
A. K. Royburn.

The *Conservator* makes the following editorial comments on the "notice":

"Elsewhere we publish a letter from David Whitmer, Sr., an old and well known citizen of Ray, as well as an endorsement of his standing as a man, signed by a number of the leading citizens of this community, in reply to some unwarranted aspirsions made upon him.

There is no doubt that Mr. Whitmer, who was one of the three witnesses of the authenticity of the gold plates, from which he asserts that Joe Smith translated the Book of Mormon, (a *fac simile* of the characters he now has in his possesion with the original records), is firmly convinced of its divine origin, and while he makes no efforts to obtrude his views or belief, he simply wants the world to know that so far as he is concerned there is no 'variableness or shadow of turning.' Having resided here for near a half of a century, it is with no little pride that he points to his past record, with the consciousness that he has done nothing derogatory to his character as a citizen and a believer in the son of Mary to warrant such an attack on him, come from what source it may, and now, with the lilies of seventy-five winters crowning him like an Aureole, and his pilgrimage on earth well nigh ended, he reiterates his former statements and will leave futurity to solve the problem that he was but a passing witness of its fulfillment."

These testimonies to the character of David Whitmer, strengthen the record that he bears of the Book which is a stumbling block to this generation but a joy to the humble seeker after divine truth. It will be remembered that Apostle Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith visited the aged witness to the Book of Mormon, while on their latest mission to the East, and again received his testimony, their account of the visit and conversation being given to the public on their return, through the *Deseret News*.

We are pleased to give place to Mr. Whitmer's vindication, and honor him for his fidelity to the truth, while we regret his blindness to the further manifestations of the power of God and revelations of light and knowledge for the salvation of mankind. The Book of Mormon is a divine work and the testimony of the three witnesses will assuredly confront the people who reject it, when they stand before the bar of eternal judgment.—*Deseret News*.